

The Tolkein Trail

We start from the Memorial Hall car park at Hurst Green where there is ample parking - paid for via an honesty box. Hurst Green is on the B6243 between Clitheroe and Longridge. To find the Memorial Hall, plug the postcode BB7 9QB into your Satnav. If you use What-3-Words, the tag is **kiosk.middle.consults** and on the paper OS map, the grid reference is SD68433819.

From the Memorial Hall, we head left along Avenue Road down to the B6243 (Whalley Road). About 500m along the main road we see the sign notifying motorists that they have arrived at Hurst Green, and to our right we see a track (Lambing Clough) heading down to Cross Gills. This is our route down to the Ribble. We take the track down to the farm and then pass to the right of the barn – to continue in a South Easterly direction down to the banks of the Ribble.

Once we get to the Ribble, our path meets the Ribble way. We now head left (upstream) and follow the Ribble for a while. Our next landmark is the confluence of the Rivers Calder and Ribble – the Calder is the smaller of the two so the combined flow remains the Ribble after they meet.

We continue upstream along the Ribble Way until we get to a second confluence – this time of the Ribble and the Hodder, and at this point the Ribble Way continues up the Hodder (it picks up the Ribble again after a short diversion up the Hodder to find a safe crossing).

About 200m North of here we arrive at Winckley Hall Farm – where the path leaves the river's edge to pass to the left of the farm buildings and then head Northwest and back to the B6243, with Spring Wood on our right.

Once we arrive at the road, we head right for about 200m until we arrive at the road bridge over the Hodder – here we take a path on the left before we cross the river. At this point we are back on a riverside path – again on the Hodder and again heading upstream. Our path continues along the left bank of the Hodder as it curves round to the left until we see Hodder Place – once a preparatory school for Stonyhurst College, and now divided into flats.

About 100m beyond Hodder Place, we leave the riverbank at a small wooden footbridge and head steeply uphill (South) using a short but brutal set of steps along a footpath that soon levels out and heads toward Stonyhurst College. After about 500m we meet a minor road - which we cross – with the path continuing past St Mary's Hall. From here we continue along the footpath keeping St Mary's and the main Stonyhurst College on our right for now. We soon arrive at a track and turn right to pass in front of the school's observatories.

Just beyond the observatory we have Fox Fall Wood in front of us, and here the public right of way offers two alternatives. Our route back to Hurst Green is to the left, directly to the village about 500m away, but an interesting and worthwhile diversion is to take the public right of way across the front of the college to enjoy the views down the fine landscaped approach and the of the college buildings themselves.

To complete the walk, we return to the junction of the routes near the observatory and head Southwest back to the village and the car park.

- **Total distance 11.0 km (6.8 miles)**
- **Total ascent 164 m**
- **Easy walk**